



Mission Dolores Neighborhood Association

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING & ENHANCING OUR HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
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Historic Survey Outreach 2005-2017

1. MDNA has been doing monthly board meetings since the current version of the organization was founded in August, 2005. That's generally 12 meetings a year for over 10 years, which are open to not just MDNA members, but to the general public. This is confirmed by the announcement on the contact page of our web site. For most of our tenure our meetings were held on the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Yet for the last year (2016) we've been meeting every three months. Our meetings are held at 65 Dorland (off Dolores) in Room 406 or 409. (The building houses the administration offices for Dolores Park Church.) For attendance, all we ask is that non-board members let us know when they're coming, so we're sure that there's enough room for them. As for the agenda, every one of those meetings has addressed our historic survey, context statement, and National Register Historic District goals. Many have also addressed quality of life issues.
2. MDNA has had various general meetings which have focused on our preservation goals, the renovation of Mission Dolores Park, and quality of life issues. They were all held at Dolores Park Church Banquet Room, 455 Dolores Street.
3. We announced these meetings through our membership list, the San Francisco Preservation Consortium, Victorian Alliance, phone calls, and several hundred fliers we hand delivered throughout the neighborhood. There has been no opposition to our preservation goals. In fact, we ended up getting many new members and donations. The public was also very enthusiastic.
4. On September 19, 2007 the Landmarks Board unanimously adopted our Draft Mission Dolores Neighborhood Historic Context

Statement. On March 17, 2010, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) unanimously adopted our Final Mission Dolores Neighborhood Historic Survey and Context Statement. On January 19, 2011, the HPC reaffirmed that both Mission Dolores Park and the Dolores Street Median were part of our adopted survey, context statement, and the proposed historic district. The HPC also clarified the language of the resolution at the Planning Department's request. For all three meetings the Planning Department sent out detailed mailings to all the property owners in the Mission Dolores Neighborhood. To our knowledge, there was NO opposition. In fact, again, there was enthusiastic support.

5. This support included dozens of letters from the community, as well as many from the Board of Supervisors, including Bevan Dufty, former BOS President Aaron Peskin, Sean Elsbernd, Sophie Maxwell, Friends of 1800, Mission High School Museum, Victorian Alliance, and San Francisco Preservation Consortium (Letters are available upon request. Yet the Planning Department is already in possession of most of them). In addition, we received an enthusiastic letter of support from former Mayor and current Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, when we received our \$46,500.00 from the HPFC (enclosed). There were also many people from the community who took the time to testify at both the Landmarks Board and the HPC.
6. Over the years, I've been a guest speaker at various additional community meetings, including public meetings sponsored by Victorian Alliance (MDNA received a \$2500.00 donation), Dolores Park Works (flier attached), the Planning Department, and Rec & Park. Each time I've mentioned our survey and historic district goals. The most recent meetings were sponsored by Rec & Park, as part of their outreach for the Mission Dolores Park renovations. While I started out being on the steering committee, I ended up resigning and turning my responsibilities over to co-president, Lucia Bogatay, AIA, since I was working on other projects and didn't want to be distracted. Yet Lucia, our new co-president, Dr. Ted Olsson, and vice-president, Gideon Kramer, stayed on the steering committee until the end. I also continued to attend, when I could fit it into my

schedule. In those meetings, our MDNA members continually made it clear what our historic goals were.

7. In addition to our preservation outreach, MDNA oversees quality of life issues and new construction and renovations in the neighborhood on a regular basis. Over the years we've helped with projects at 2001 Market Street, 25-35 Dolores, 200 Dolores, 299 Valencia, 2175 Market, 601 Dolores, 651 Dolores, 3140 16th Street, as well as many others. (As of 2017, the last properties is currently being transformed from an historic garage to restaurants, with our support.) In the process we've helped generate some outstanding new designs and restorations. We've also helped prevent the demolition of at least five historic resources (some of which are detailed in items #8 & 10). We were also instrumental in making sure that the large new project at 2001 Market had a design that was top quality modern, yet also fit into the historic and residential landscape at the gateway of the Mission Dolores Neighborhood. (That building later won a design award.) 25 Dolores is another outstanding example of a new design, which added to the neighborhood beauty.
8. I've been interviewed by various newspapers, including the San Francisco Chronicle, Examiner, and Mission Local. I was also interviewed by CBS Television News, together with board member Joe Cain, when we were attempting to save 651-655 Dolores (the former Second Church of Christ Scientist) from demolition. In the end, thanks to our efforts, the building was saved. (It was later bought by Siamak Akhavan, who later became one of our board members and has completed renovating the building for new housing. Mr. Akhavan also completely renovated the former Golden Gate Lutheran Church, at 601 Dolores, which was also in danger of being demolished. He then sold it to Children's Day School for their new middle school. We enthusiastically endorsed both projects.) For 651-655 Dolores, Siamak Akhavan and I were interviewed by ABC Television on a segment about saving historic churches, which aired on October 1, 2012. As of 2016, the building now houses 4 condos and the exterior and most of the interior completely restored. Mr.

Akhavan also retrofitted the building.

9. Another building that we helped save from demolition was the parsonage building at 200 Dolores after the stunning Gothic Revival Swedish Lutheran Church was burnt down next door, in 1993. For our robust community outreach, I wrote a petition (with the assistance of architectural historian Vincent Marsh) asking for a Focused EIR. 115 neighbors then signed it in two short afternoons before Sophie Hayward took it to the Landmarks Board, where we also testified. In response, every member of the landmarks board decided to write a letter of support clearly stating that the building was a contributor to a proposed historic district and should be saved. In response, the Planning Department announced that they supported the Landmark Board's position. That 1903 historic resource is now being restored, together with the construction of 10 new units on the corner. (On a side note, speaking of community outreach, long before the original church was unfortunately burnt down by the homeless from the poorly managed shelter next door, it was saved during the 1906 earthquake and fire by its Scandinavian congregation and the local dairy farming community. Their successful strategy was to climb to the top of the church, place blankets on the roof, and then pour milk over the blankets to stop the fire. This story is confirmed by Dr. Ted Olsson, our current co-president, whose family was part of that congregation and owned the only Swedish language newspaper in San Francisco for 100 years.)
10. Emeritus board member, Dr. Ted Scourkes, wrote the nomination for Mission High School, which MDNA enthusiastically endorsed. We also testified at the BOS in support of his nomination. In addition, Dr. Scourkes gathered letters of support from the last five principals at Mission High School, as well as the general public. (Dr. Scourkes was also principal of Mission High during the 1960s and 1970s when Carlos Santana and Leland Yee were students there.) The nomination clearly supports our contention that his area is part of the Mission District. Mission High School is now City Landmark #255.

11. For over eleven years members of MDNA have testified at the Planning Commission, HPC, and Board of Supervisors on dozens of occasions. In addition to testifying in support of our survey, context statement, and proposed historic district, we've also testified about the Market Octavia Plan, Inner Mission North Survey, the renovation of Mission Dolores Park, as well as the many projects mentioned in item #7. We've always been faithful to our Mission Statement. To confirm, please reference the Planning Department's own video and audio recordings.

12. In addition to our members and the general public, visitors to our general, board, and special meetings have included members of the Planning Commission, Planning Department, Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), Rec & Park, Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Public Works (DPW), and California State Senate, including Scott Wiener, Bevan Dufty, Leland Yee, Alan Martinez, Aaron Peskin, Karl Hasz, Bill Sugaya, Gwen Borden, Mike Antonini, Ron Miguel, Kathrin Moore, Captain Robert Moser, as well as local merchants. These meetings focused on our preservation goals, new construction, as well as quality of life issues.

13. In our pursuit to support quality new construction, MDNA has worked closely with Prado Group, Lightner Properties, architects Toby Levy, William McDonough + Partners, Oyster Development Corp., as well as many others. In the past eleven+ years anyone interested in a new building project typically contacts us before we need to contact them, since they're well aware of our influence in the community.

14. Additional outreach includes our highly informative web site which was launched in 2007 and received 60,000 visitors in the first year alone. We're now averaging around 3,000 visitors per month. In addition to our mission statement and board of directors, our web site includes a comprehensive list of our donations and grants. It also has many scholarly documents that the public downloads on a regular basis, as well as information about how they can become

members or attend our meetings. For your information, our web site address is: <http://www.missiondna.org>. It's no mistake that the address is defined as the DNA of The Mission.

15. As you can see from above, MDNA has completed far more outreach than most of the other community groups in San Francisco. We've done this primarily to educate the public about the wonderful and historically important Mission Dolores Neighborhood, a sub-area of the Mission and the birthplace of San Francisco.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Lewis, President and Founder: Current MDNA

More to come soon.